

MEMORIAL
OF
CITIZENS OF TENNESSEE,

PRAYING

An appropriation to repair the breach in the dam at the head of Cumberland island, in the Ohio river.

MARCH 29, 1848.

Referred to the Committee on Roads and Canals, and ordered to be printed.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled :

The undersigned, your memorialists, citizens of the city of Clarksville, Tennessee, and surrounding country, would most respectfully represent, that the late breach in the dam at the head of Cumberland island, across a portion of the Ohio river, erected under the administration of President Jackson, some fifteen years ago, renders the navigation of said river, in low water, exceedingly dangerous to commerce and to human life, and presents a very serious obstruction, not only to the commerce of the whole country, but also to the transportation of troops and munitions of war. They will state that during the last two years, a number of loaded flat boats and a large amount of commerce have been destroyed upon said dam; that a great many steamboats descending the river have been seriously injured, and others put in the greatest peril, by reason of said obstruction, and that during last summer two steamers in the employment of the government, having on board troops destined for the seat of war in Mexico, and freighted with government stores, and articles and munitions of war, in attempting to pass through the breach in the dam, hung upon the rocks, and were in the most imminent peril for a considerable length of time, during which a man employed on one of the boats was suddenly killed by reason of this detention. Your memorialists will state that the said dam *must*, of necessity, either be repaired forthwith, or removed altogether: and that from the immense size of the rocks forming said dam, and from the great length of time they have been imbedded in the earth, it would cost the government, in the opinion of your memorialists, a larger sum of money to remove the obstruction, so as to render the navigation of said river safe, than it would to repair the breach.

Your memorialists will state that the main object in the erection of said dam, in the first instance, was to throw the waters of the Ohio and Cum-

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berland together, and thereby create a channel through Cumberland and Cottonwood bars, at the foot and on the east side of Cumberland island, which bars, previous to the construction of the dam, owing to the great width of the Ohio below the island, almost entirely obstructed the navigation of said river in low water. They will state, that if said dam were removed, Cumberland and Cottonwood bars, at the foot of and below the island, would again be formed as they were previous to its construction, and would not only greatly injure the navigation of the Ohio, but would seriously affect all the great interests connected with the commerce and navigation of the Cumberland river; for your memorialists will state that previous to the construction of the dam, the water on that portion of Cumberland bar extending from the foot of Cumberland island to the Kentucky shore, was so very shallow in the summer season as to prevent boats of the smallest size from running out of and into the Cumberland river from the Ohio: to remedy this evil the dam was built. Your memorialists will therefore most respectfully state to your honorable bodies that the said dam, in their opinion, ought *immediately* to be repaired by the government, and not removed—

1st. Because the repairing of the work would throw the water of the Ohio and Cumberland rivers together; and thereby create a good channel for steamers running out of the Cumberland river in low water, and would render the navigation of the Ohio more safe below Cumberland island than if said dam were removed.

2d. Because the cost of the removal would be equally as great or greater than the cost of repairing said work.

3d. Because if said dam were removed, Cumberland bar, between the lower end of the island and the Kentucky shore, would again be formed, and thereby greatly embarrass the transportation of commerce out of and into the Cumberland river in low water, and would vitally injure the great interests connected with the immense trade of said river. Your memorialists therefore pray your honorable bodies to pass a law during the present session of Congress, making a special appropriation sufficient to repair the breach in said dam during the present year; and, in duty bound, they will ever pray, &c.

CLARKSVILLE, TENN., *February 24, 1848.*

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Your memorialists will state that the main object in the erection of said dam, in the first instance, was to throw the waters of the Ohio and Cum-

berland together, and thereby create a channel through Cumberland and Cottonwood bars, at the foot and on the east side of Cumberland island, which bars, previous to the construction of the dam, owing to the great width of the Ohio below the island, almost entirely obstructed the navigation of said river in low water. They will state, that if said dam were removed, Cumberland and Cottonwood bars, at the foot of and below the island, would again be formed as they were previous to its construction, and would not only greatly injure the navigation of the Ohio, but would seriously affect all the great interests connected with the commerce and navigation of the Cumberland river; for your memorialists will state that previous to the construction of the dam, the water on that portion of Cumberland bar extending from the foot of Cumberland island to the Kentucky shore, was so very shallow in the summer season as to prevent boats of the smallest size from running out of and into the Cumberland river from the Ohio: to remedy this evil the dam was built. Your memorialists will therefore most respectfully state to your honorable bodies that the said dam, in their opinion, ought *immediately* to be repaired by the government, and not removed—

1st. Because the repairing of the work would throw the water of the Ohio and Cumberland rivers together, and thereby create a good channel for steamers running out of the Cumberland river in low water, and would render the navigation of the Ohio more safe below Cumberland island than if said dam were removed.

2d. Because the cost of the removal would be equally as great or greater than the cost of repairing said work.

3d. Because if said dam were removed, Cumberland bar, between the lower end of the island and the Kentucky shore, would again be formed, and thereby greatly embarrass the transportation of commerce out of and into the Cumberland river in low water, and would vitally injure the great interests connected with the immense trade of said river. Your memorialists therefore pray your honorable bodies to pass a law during the present session of Congress, making a special appropriation sufficient to repair the breach in said dam during the present year; and, in duty bound, they will ever pray, &c.

CLARKSVILLE, TENN., *February 24, 1848.*